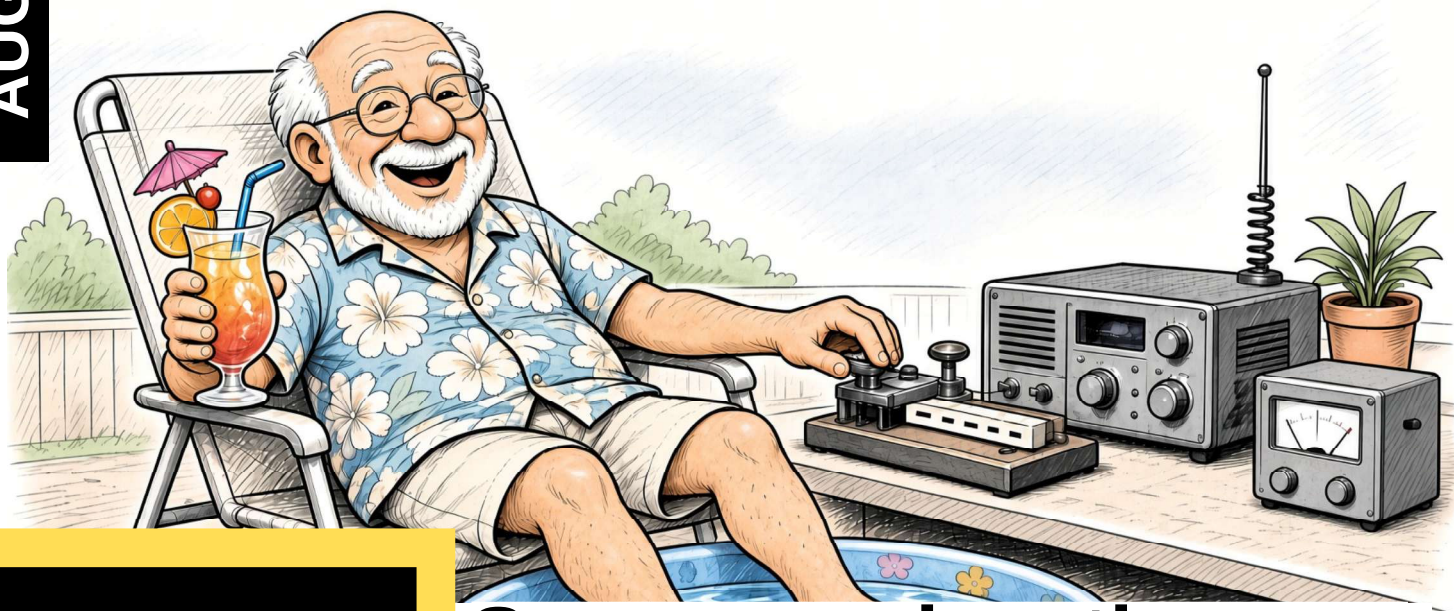
AUGUST 2026

ZERO BEAT

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



What's Inside

1. **Summer relaxation, PPRAA style!**
2. **Multi-station ops at PPRAA events**
6. **PPRAA summer picnic details**

Summer relaxation, PPRAA style!

By LD Steiner/W0XLD

Do hams sit under a shade umbrella, feet in a kiddie pool of water, with one hand on a Morse code key while the other holds a fruity beverage? If that's your summer, you have the envy of some PPRAA officers and board members who have been keeping busy coordinating events, renting venues, hauling gear, and trying to squeeze in a net or a new DX entity on FT8 when time permits. Why do they do this, instead of slowly sipping on a frosty Mai Tai? Because they love these events! Meeting up with fellow hams, coaching new operators, doing special event stations, and enjoying cookout food with friends are just more ways to take advantage of long summer days, perhaps not very relaxing, but well worth the effort.

With several events behind us and a few left ahead, this Zero Beat newsletter sometimes gets neglected, but we want to squeeze in the opportunity to share a few past and upcoming events when time permits. So enjoy this short summer catch-up edition, with lessons learned from the *USS Pueblo* special event station and summer field day, as well as an announcement about the upcoming club picnic.

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NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Multi-station ops at PPRAA events

By LD Steiner/W0XLD

June has been all about multi-station operations for PPRAA. In our first weekend, June 5-7, we activated the *USS Pueblo* memorial at the Pueblo Convention Center for Museum Ships Weekend. With the antenna-farm space constrained by the size of the convention center roof, the antennas for multiple stations were situated very close to each other, and often in the same polarization. This led to interference from the digital stations to the voice stations, and even digital stations on different bands interfering with each other and bleeding into each others' decodes.Doug/ N7LEM and LD/W0XLD described the event at the June membership meeting, and the members in attendance discussed best practices for minimizing crosstalk when practices for minimizing crosstalk when operating with multiple stations at the same location. Suggestions included:

- Increasing distance between antennas
- Using band-pass filters
- Using orthogonal polarizations (some vertical, some horizontal)
- Operating in shifts
- Using directional antennas pointed in different directions
- Using loading coils to narrow antenna bandwidth

We got an opportunity to try these strategies at field day, June 26-28, which was again held at Mountain View Electric Association in Falcon. Club leadership

(Cont. page 3)

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ZERO BEAT

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Multi-station ops, cont.

planned for three HF stations, one for main voice operations, one for digital, and one Get-On-The-Air (GOTA) station, as well as a VHF/UHF station, a 60-meter antenna for non-contest National Traffic System operations, and several exhibitor canopies.

Ken/K0KWH was able to coordinate with the Mountain View staff to gain permission to use the company's large parking lot on the west side of the building, which made a huge difference this year. With his voice station positioned far to the west, and LD/W0XLD occupying the far southeast corner of the main parking lot with the digital station, we were able to make use of the full 1000-foot radius allowed by field day rules for maximum separation between stations. Ken's antenna for the voice station was a delta loop fed from the bottom vertex, resulting in horizontal polarization with east/west main lobes.

LD's digital station antenna was a bottom-fed, center-loaded vertical with fairly low-angle propagation in all directions. The GOTA station provided by Brett/WD0BVD used a G5RV antenna positioned straight south from Ken's antenna,

(Cont. page 4)

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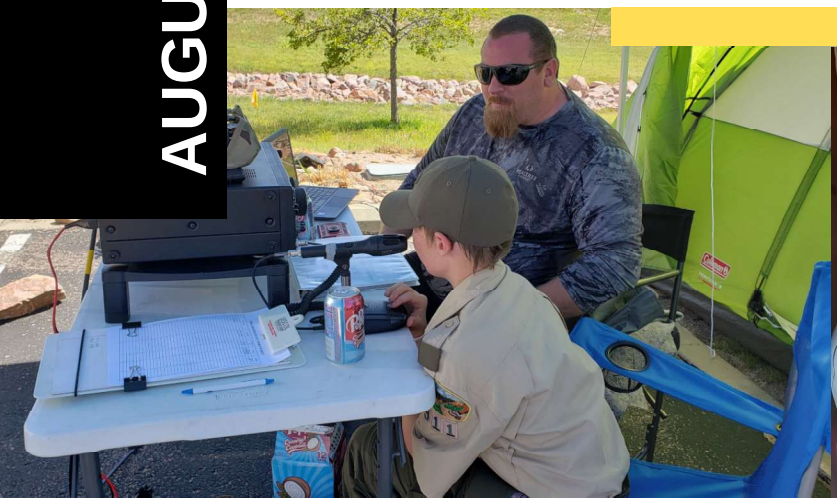
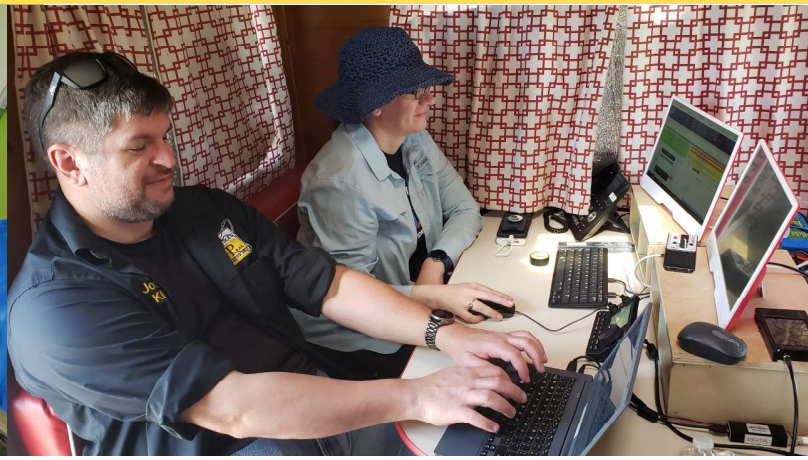
ZERO BEAT

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS





Multi-station ops, cont.

also angled to propagate straight east/west, which resulted in no cross-talk between the voice and GOTA stations when used on different bands. The long distance between the voice and digital station (and the metal building in between them!) resulted in no bleedover from the digital station into the voice station, even when used on the same band.

After setup on Friday evening, the stations were able to prove their non-interference design with contacts made all over the US and to several DX stations, including European and Asiatic Russia, Japan, Indonesia, Nordic countries, South America, and even the Republic of Congo, all without producing audible interference between antennas. On Saturday, a fast-moving thunderstorm cell swept through, testing antennas with high-speed wind gusts and a small hail storm, but all antennas survived unscathed.

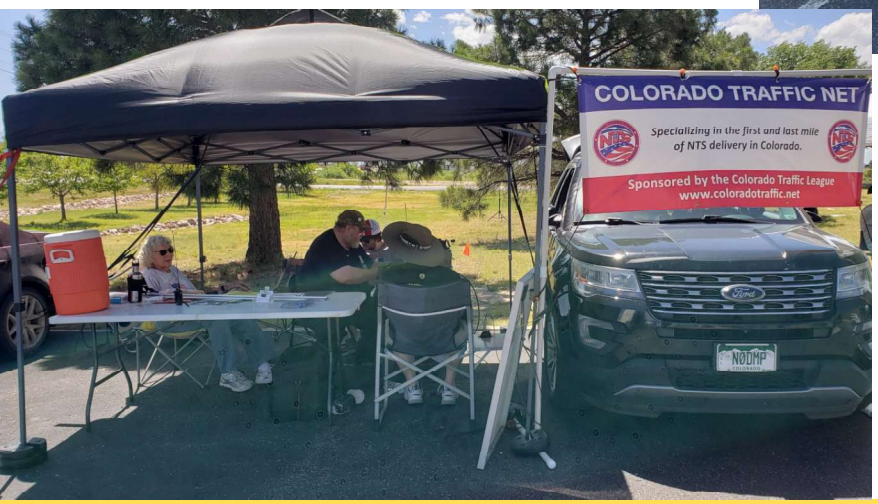
Field day went well, with more than 750 contacts made, all 50 states worked, most of the Canadian sections worked, and even DX contacts in England, Mexico, and Uruguay. Unusually compared to past years, the 20-meter band was in the best shape throughout the weekend, so both the digital and voice stations achieved 80% of these contacts by staying on 20 meters… which was possible because this year, they didn't interfere with each other, even on the same band!

Thanks go to Mountain View Electric Association, Pikes Peak Regional Office of Emergency Management, Colorado Traffic League, Pikes Peak ARES, the local chapters of Scouting America, and all PPRAA members who made this event a success. The food was great as

(Cont. page 5)

Multi-station ops, cont.

usual, thanks to Doug/N7LEM and family; the late-night chats were fun; Karen/KF0INE was a pleasure to hear working pileups with her boundless patience; and new friends and members were welcomed to the group. With new capabilities and site layout plans, PPRAA looks forward to more successful multi-station operations in the future.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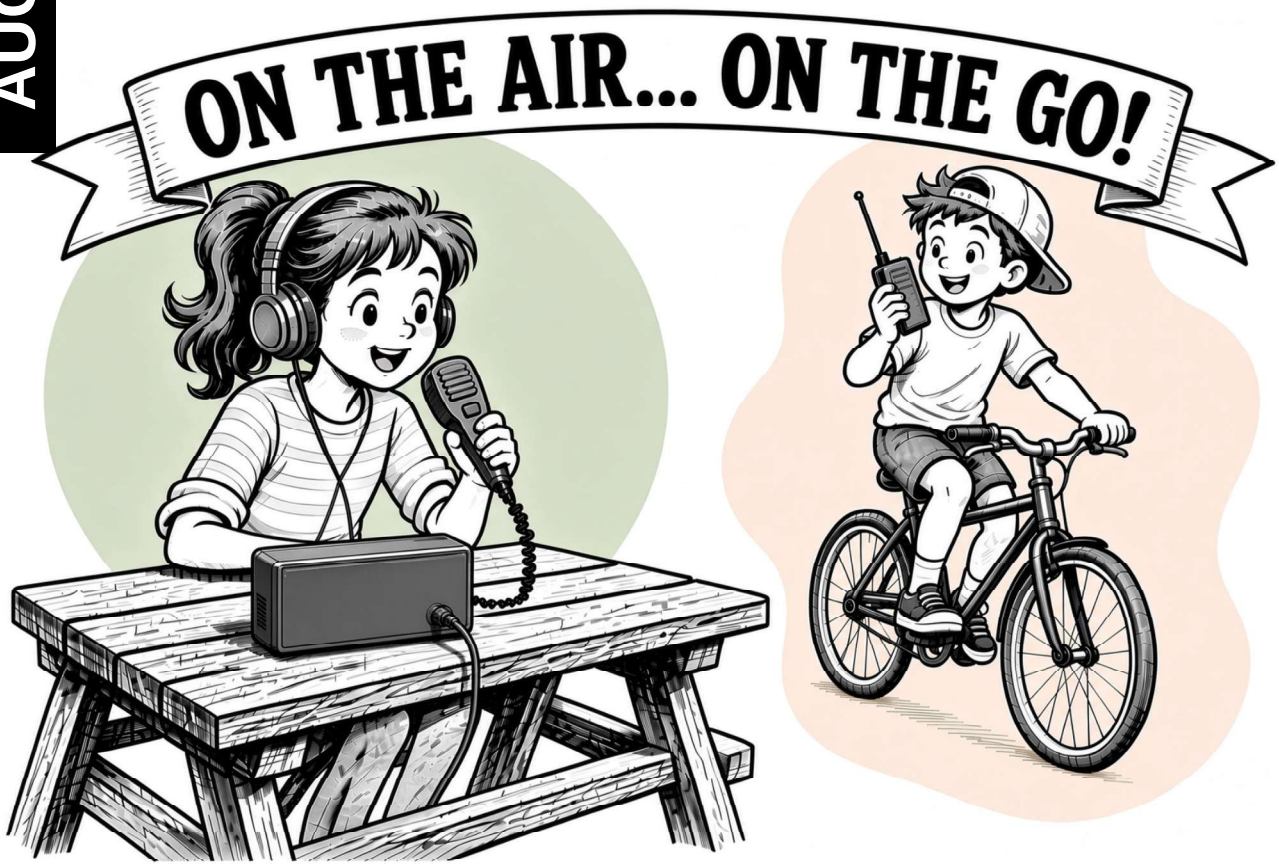

2026 PPRAA SUMMER PICNIC

Saturday, Aug. 22, 1000-1600 hrs

Fox Run Regional Park, Pavilion 3

2110 Stella Dr, Colorado Springs CO 80921

With prizes for...

BEST MOBILE STATION
(Vehicle installation)

BEST PORTABLE STATION
(SOTA/POTA/backpack)

Burgers, dogs, and drinks provided;
please bring a side or dessert to share